



29 November 2024

FOI Ref 17151

Request - You asked us the following:

REQUEST 1:

What is the name and software version of your current ICCS system?

What is the contract end date of the existing ICCS system?

Are there any plans to replace it, if so when?

What plans (if any) are in place to collaborate with partner Forces/Agencies in terms of sharing the technology, or actual control rooms?

What is the name of your Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), software version, and contract end date?

What back-office systems is the CAD integrated into?

Are there any plans to replace your CAD system and if so when?

REQUEST 2:

What make, model and manufacturer of body worn cameras does your force use?

When did your current body worn camera contract start?

Which procurement route was used (e.g. was a framework used?) How many devices do you have?

Roughly how much has been spent since contract start?

How much was spent in calendar year 2023?

When does your current contract expire?

Do your body worn cameras have live streaming capabilities?

REQUEST 3:

Does your force use drones?

If yes, please provide the make, model and manufacturer of the drones you have purchased.

If no, are there plans to start?

How many drones do you have?

How much was spent in calendar year 2023 on drones?

We received your request on 13/08/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Please find below our response.

Staffordshire Police holds/does not hold the following requested information.

REQUEST 1:

- What is the name and software version of your current ICCS system? – **Disclosed, DS3000 Integrated Communications Control System (ICCS) for Control room Audio communications.**
- What is the contract end date of the existing ICCS system? – **Disclosed, December 2026.**



- Are there any plans to replace it, if so when? – **No information held.**
- What plans (if any) are in place to collaborate with partner Forces/Agencies in terms of sharing the technology, or actual control rooms? – **No information held.**
- What is the name of your Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), software version, and contract end date? – **Disclosed, Steria Storm , Autodesk. End date is 2025**
- What back-office systems is the CAD integrated into? – **Disclosed, Sterian Storm version.**
- Are there any plans to replace your CAD system and if so when? – **No information held.**

REQUEST 2:

- What make, model and manufacturer of body worn cameras does your force use? – **Disclosed, Axon AB2 and Flex 2.**
- When did your current body worn camera contract start? – **Disclosed, August 2021.**
- Which procurement route was used (e.g. was a framework used?) How many devices do you have? – **Disclosed, Direct Award via a Framework. We have 2536 AB2 devices and 182 Flex 2 devices.**
- Roughly how much has been spent since contract start? – **Disclosed, £1,170,278.**
- How much was spent in calendar year 2023? – **Disclosed, £353,860.**
- When does your current contract expire? – **Disclosed, July 2026.**
- Do your body worn cameras have live streaming capabilities? – **Disclosed, no.**

REQUEST 3:

- Does your force use drones? – **Withheld, please see advice and assistance section below.**
- If yes, please provide the make, model and manufacturer of the drones you have purchased. – **Unknown***
- If no, are there plans to start? – **Not applicable.**
- How many drones do you have? – **Unknown***
- How much was spent in calendar year 2023 on drones? – **Unknown***

The following exemptions have been applied:

In accordance with Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, this letter represents a refusal notice for parts of this particular request.

- Section 21(1) - Information reasonably accessible by other means.

Section 21 is an absolute, class-based exemption and as such there is no requirement to quantify the harm that may arise from the disclosure, nor is there a requirement to perform a Public Interest Test.

With regard to the covert use of body worn video, Staffordshire Police neither confirms nor denies that it holds any other information relevant to the request by virtue of the following exemption:

- Section 31(3) Law Enforcement

With regard to the covert use of drones, Staffordshire Police neither confirms nor denies that it holds any other information relevant to the request by virtue of the following exemptions:

- Section 23(5) Information supplied by, or concerning, certain security bodies
- Section 24(2) National Security
- Section 31(3) Law enforcement

Section 23 is an absolute class-based exemption and there is no requirement to conduct a harm or public interest test.

Sections 24, and 31 are prejudice based qualified exemptions and there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in confirming or denying that any other information is held as well as carrying out a public interest test.

Harm

As you may be aware, disclosure under FOIA is a release to the public at large. Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant, confirming or denying that any other information is held regarding the use of this specialist equipment for covert use, would show criminals what the capacity, tactical abilities and capabilities of the force are, allowing them to target specific areas of the UK to conduct their criminal/terrorist activities. Confirming or denying the specific circumstances in which the police service may or may not deploy UAV, would lead to an increase of harm to covert investigations and compromise law enforcement. This would be to the detriment of providing an efficient policing service and a failure in providing a duty of care to all members of the public.

It is well established that police forces use covert tactics and surveillance to gain intelligence in order to counteract criminal behaviour. It has been previously documented in the media that many terrorist incidents have been thwarted due to intelligence gained by these means.

Confirming or denying that any other information is held in relation to the covert use of UAV would limit operational capabilities as criminals/terrorists would gain a greater understanding of the police's methods and techniques, enabling them to take steps to counter them. It may also suggest the limitations of police capabilities in this area, which may further encourage criminal/terrorist activity by exposing potential vulnerabilities. This detrimental effect is increased if the request is made to several different law enforcement bodies. In addition to the local criminal fraternity now being better informed, those intent on organised crime throughout the UK will be able to 'map' where the use of certain tactics are or are not deployed. This can be useful information to those committing crimes. It would have the likelihood of

identifying location-specific operations which would ultimately compromise police tactics, operations and future prosecutions as criminals could counteract the measures used against them.

Any information identifying the focus of policing activity could be used to the advantage of terrorists or criminal organisations. Information that undermines the operational integrity of these activities will adversely affect public safety and have a negative impact on both national security and law enforcement.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring Neither Confirming Nor Denying for Section 24

The information if held simply relates to national security and confirming or denying whether it is held would not actually harm it. The public are entitled to know what public funds are spent on and what security measures are in place, and by confirming or denying whether any other information regarding the covert use of UAV is held, would lead to a better-informed public.

Factors against Neither Confirming Nor Denying for Section 24

By confirming or denying whether any other information is held would render Security measures less effective. This would lead to the compromise of ongoing or future operations to protect the security or infrastructure of the UK and increase the risk of harm to the public.

Factors favouring Neither Confirming Nor Denying for Section 31

Confirming or denying whether any other information is held regarding the covert use of UAV would provide an insight into the police service. This would enable the public to have a better understanding of the effectiveness of the police and about how the police gather intelligence. It would greatly assist in the quality and accuracy of public debate, which could otherwise be steeped in rumour and speculation. Where public funds are being spent, there is a public interest in accountability and justifying the use of public money.

Some information is already in the public domain regarding the police use of this type of specialist equipment and confirming or denying whether any other information is held would ensure transparency and accountability and enable the public to see what tactics are deployed by the Police Service to detect crime.

Factors against Neither Confirming Nor Denying for Section 31

Confirming or denying that any other information is held regarding the covert use of UAV would have the effect of compromising law enforcement tactics and would also hinder any future investigations. In addition, confirming or denying methods used to gather intelligence for an investigation would prejudice that investigation and any possible future proceedings.

It has been recorded that FOIA releases are monitored by criminals and terrorists and so to confirm or deny any other information is held concerning specialist covert tactics would lead to law enforcement being undermined. The Police Service is reliant upon all manner of techniques during operations and the public release of any modus operandi employed, if held, would prejudice the ability of the Police Service to conduct similar investigations.

By confirming or denying whether any other information is held in relation to the covert use of UAV would hinder the prevention or detection of crime. The Police Service would not wish to reveal what tactics may or may not have been used to gain intelligence as this would clearly undermine the law enforcement and investigative process. This would impact on police resources and more crime and terrorist incidents would be committed, placing individuals at risk. It can be argued that there are significant risks associated with providing information, if held, in relation to any aspect of investigations or of any nation's security arrangements so confirming or denying that any other information is held, may reveal the relative vulnerability of what we may be trying to protect.

Balance Test

The security of the country is of paramount importance and the Police service will not divulge whether any other information is or is not held regarding the covert use of UAV if to do so would place the safety of an individual at risk, undermine National Security or compromise law enforcement.

Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing operations and providing assurance that the police service is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by various groups or individuals, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of police investigations and operations in the highly sensitive areas such as extremism, crime prevention, public disorder and terrorism prevention.

As much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances. The areas of police interest discussed above are sensitive issues that reveal local intelligence and therefore it is our opinion that for these issues the balancing test for confirming or denying whether any other information is held regarding the covert use of UAV, is not made out.

However, this should not be taken as necessarily indicating that any information that would meet your request exists or does not exist.

Advice and assistance

In order to comply with our obligations under Section 16 of the Act, the obligation to provide advice and assistance, please find below links to the information requested.

- <https://www.staffordshire.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/foi-media/staffordshire/2023-published-foi-requests/may/foi-15584-drones-for-police-operations.pdf>

*We have made numerous exhaustive attempts to obtain the data you have requested from the relevant data holders within the force. However, following all attempts, we have been unable to receive a satisfactory response from the data holder with which to provide a response to your request. If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your information request, you can make an appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The easiest way to lodge your appeal is via their website: www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Staffordshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing within two months of the date of receipt of this email, and should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Central Disclosure Unit
Staffordshire Police HQ
PO Box 3167
Stafford
ST16 9JZ

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Central Disclosure Unit within two months of the Force's response to the original FOI request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Central Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within 20 working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

ICO Website for complaints link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit